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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 001657

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARPI, DS, S/CT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/01/2014

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: TERRORISM SUSPECTS RELEASED PENDING DECEMBER 6

COURT DATE

Classified by Ambassador William T. Monroe for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Minister of Justice Al Arrayid confirmed to the Ambassador that charges had been filed against the four terrorism suspects at a court hearing on November 1, and that they had been released pending their next court date on December 6. He said that the government did not have the legal authority to extend the detention of the suspects once again until the next session. He promised a fuller explanation to the Ambassador in a meeting planned for November 2.

¶2. (C) Ambassador called Minister of Industry (and confidant to the King) Fakhro to express his concern regarding the release of the four. Fakhro, after talking to the King, called the Ambassador back to say that the King had told him the four would be sentenced on December 6. (Comment: We understand that the December 6 session will in fact be the beginning of the actual trial. End Comment.) In the meantime, their passports are being held by the public prosecutor, they will be kept under surveillance, and they will not be allowed to leave the country. "Rest assured," he said, "everything will be done from our side to ensure that they are dealt with appropriately."

¶3. (C) Attorney and MP Farid Ghazi Rifaie, who represents one of the accused, told PolFSN that the November 1 session was quick. The judge received the results of an investigation of physical evidence, which concluded there was no trace of explosives in fertilizer and sand seized by the police. The prosecutor requested that the detainees remain in custody, and defense lawyers requested they be released. The judge decided to release them and, according to a press contact in the court room, the suspects had to provide their residences as bonds. They also agreed to be available to the government at their residences and not to leave the country. (Note: Rifaie said the suspects simply had to provide information on their places of residence rather than offer them as bonds. End Note.) Rifaie said that the four had been charged under Article 156 of the penal code, criminal agreement to commit a crime. This is the best the prosecution can do in the absence of a terrorism conspiracy law.

¶4. (C) Comment: While the judge's action today is a disappointment, we will continue to push the GOB hard on the need for a conviction and sentencing, both to get these four off the streets and to send a strong message on Bahrain's willingness to combat terrorism.

MONROE